

**Opening Statement: Chairman Norman Dicks**  
**US Environmental Protection Agency, 2011 Budget Hearing**

February 24, 2010, 2pm

Good afternoon. I want to welcome everyone to this Subcommittee's first budget hearing this year. Today we will discuss the Environmental Protection Agency's budget request for fiscal year 2011. It is only fitting that we start the year reviewing how we can better protect our citizens and our environment.

Administrator Jackson, thank you for being here today to outline your priorities for 2011. The past year was a busy one for you. One year and one week ago, this Committee nearly doubled your budget with the infusion of \$7.22 billion for water infrastructure, land cleanup and diesel emission reduction projects in the Recovery Act. To date, as many as 6,700 jobs have been saved or created with this funding, not to mention all of the equipment and construction funded as well. We are interested in hearing what else you have accomplished with those funds and what more we can expect. There is still much more that needs to be done to accelerate the pace of these projects and to assist in the recovery of our economy.

In addition to putting Americans back to work in calendar year 2009, EPA:

- carefully reviewed the science and determined that greenhouse gases are harmful to human health and the environment;
- finalized the mandatory greenhouse gas reporting rule directed by this Subcommittee;
- strengthened air and water quality standards;
- re-doubled efforts in the Chesapeake Bay and Puget Sound to address non-point source pollution and nutrient loading; and,

- increased the review and oversight of mountain-top mining permits to ensure protection of water quality.

In Fiscal Year 2010, this Committee provided you with the largest budget in EPA's history. There were some on this Committee that thought that level was too high. I couldn't disagree more. There is a general consensus that the current state of our nation's infrastructure is inadequate. It is important to note that of the \$2.7 billion increase in Fiscal Year 2010, \$2 billion of it was targeted to drinking water and wastewater infrastructure improvements. That is just a fraction of the 20 year \$662 billion funding gap one of your predecessors identified. And every penny of that \$2 billion increase is passed through EPA and given to states and communities. It funded approximately 670 projects nationwide.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative also received a substantial and very necessary increase. However, the recent identification of Asian carp DNA beyond the fish barrier near Chicago is yet another example of ongoing threats to our ecosystems, economy and environment that require immediate investment.

On top of increased funding, in 2010 the Committee authorized additional subsidies to assist small communities that often struggle to pay for the necessary water and wastewater treatment upgrades needed to provide safe and clean water for their citizens. These subsidies included grants, loan forgiveness and negative interest loans and additional financing for green infrastructure. I'm pleased to see that your budget continues these creative funding vehicles.

And now to your budget request. You have requested \$10.02 billion, making this the second highest request ever for the Agency. Equally as notable is

the \$43 million in new funding to begin to take real, measured steps to reduce greenhouse gases and address climate change. As you know, we in the House passed our version of a climate bill last June. We recognized the need for action and I'm glad to see the Administration does too.

More than half your budget funds grants to States and Tribes. Within this amount you provide \$1.3 billion, a \$160 million increase, for the direct implementation of state environmental programs through categorical grants. This increase includes \$30 million in new funding for Tribes to begin to implement their own environmental programs after years of building the capacity to do so. You also have a healthy \$41.5 million increase for Brownfields clean up and redevelopment. I'm pleased to see this progress from these partnerships.

As you know, this Subcommittee has had a special interest in protecting the Nation's great water bodies, including the Great Lakes and environmentally sensitive estuaries. I see you have requested an additional \$13 million for the country's largest estuary, while reducing the budget by 60% for the nation's second largest estuary. I will work with the Subcommittee to carefully review that decision. You have also requested \$16 million in new funding for the Upper Mississippi River basin, our largest watershed which also faces many non-point source and nutrient pollution issues.

The Subcommittee will continue to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars and insist you use resources wisely. The Nation has real needs that demand every dollar be effectively utilized. To ensure resources are used as effectively and efficiently as possible, we are committed to analyzing the budget to seek out any areas of waste. We also need to ensure proper accountability and oversight of

resources already provided to EPA. We need strong enforcement so that the general taxpayer isn't left to foot the bill for the negligence of some. EPA needs to ensure that these dollars, and all sources of funding, are used quickly and produce real environmental improvements as the sense of urgency has never been more real.

Before Administrator Jackson begins her statement, Mr. Simpson, would you like to make any opening comments?

[Simpson opening remarks]

Mr Obey, do you have any opening comments you would like to make?

[Obey opening remarks]

Administrator Jackson, please share with us your vision for EPA in 2011.